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ABSTRACT

The author defines populations communications as all information, education, and other activities which can produce changes in attitudes and behavior towards contraception, family planning, and population growth. He discusses in this paper the effort made in 27 nations to utilize commercial, profit-making goods and services for the purpose of educating the public on the hazards of over-population and the methods available for population control. The types of commercial programs are: use of mass media, advertising and promotion, public relations efforts, marketing of contraceptives, education and training, research and evaluation of the program, and development of special materials. (PN)

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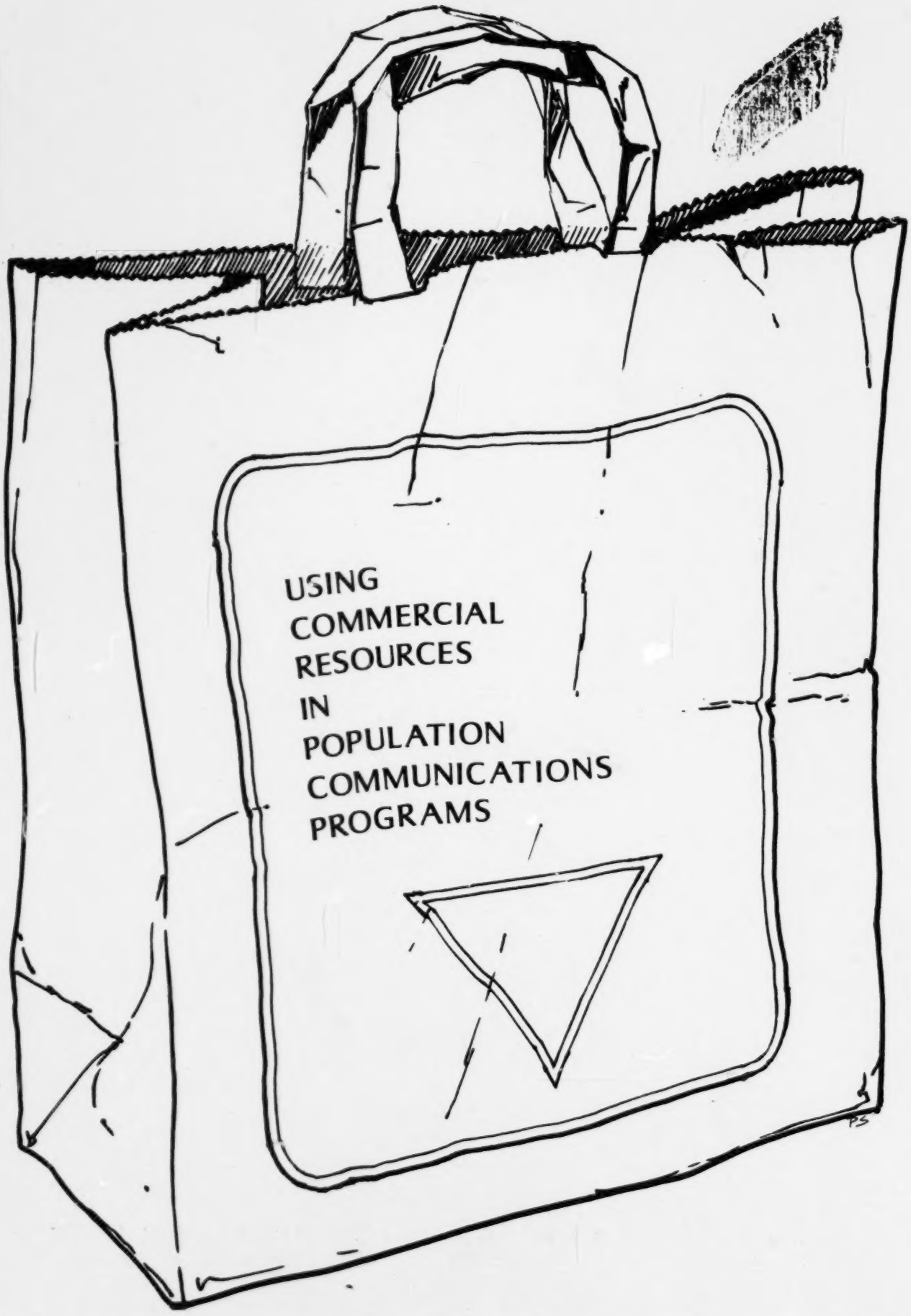

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USING COMMERCIAL RESOURCES IN POPULATION COMMUNICATIONS PROGRAMS

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This paper was prepared for the "Conference on Commercial Resources and Their Application to Population Communication", East-West Communication Institute, Honolulu, Hawaii, December 4-8, 1972.

SUMMARY

In population communications programs the commercial resources used include the mass media, advertising and promotion, public relations, marketing, training, research and education and materials development. The use of commercial resources is identified in 27 country programs.

Commercial. That is the operative word in this paper. "Prepared, done or acting with sole or chief emphasis on salability, profit or success" is a suitable contemporary definition. (1) Using commercial resources means buying goods and services usually sold for a profit. The subject of this paper is the present, and possible future, uses of services and goods usually sold for a profit in population communications programs.

In this paper, Population Communications is an operations term. It includes all information, education and support activities which can produce attitudinal and behavioral changes towards contraception, family planning and population problems. Population communications includes (Table 1):

I. Public Information

- use of the mass media
- advertising and promotion
- public relations
- marketing of contraceptives

II. Education

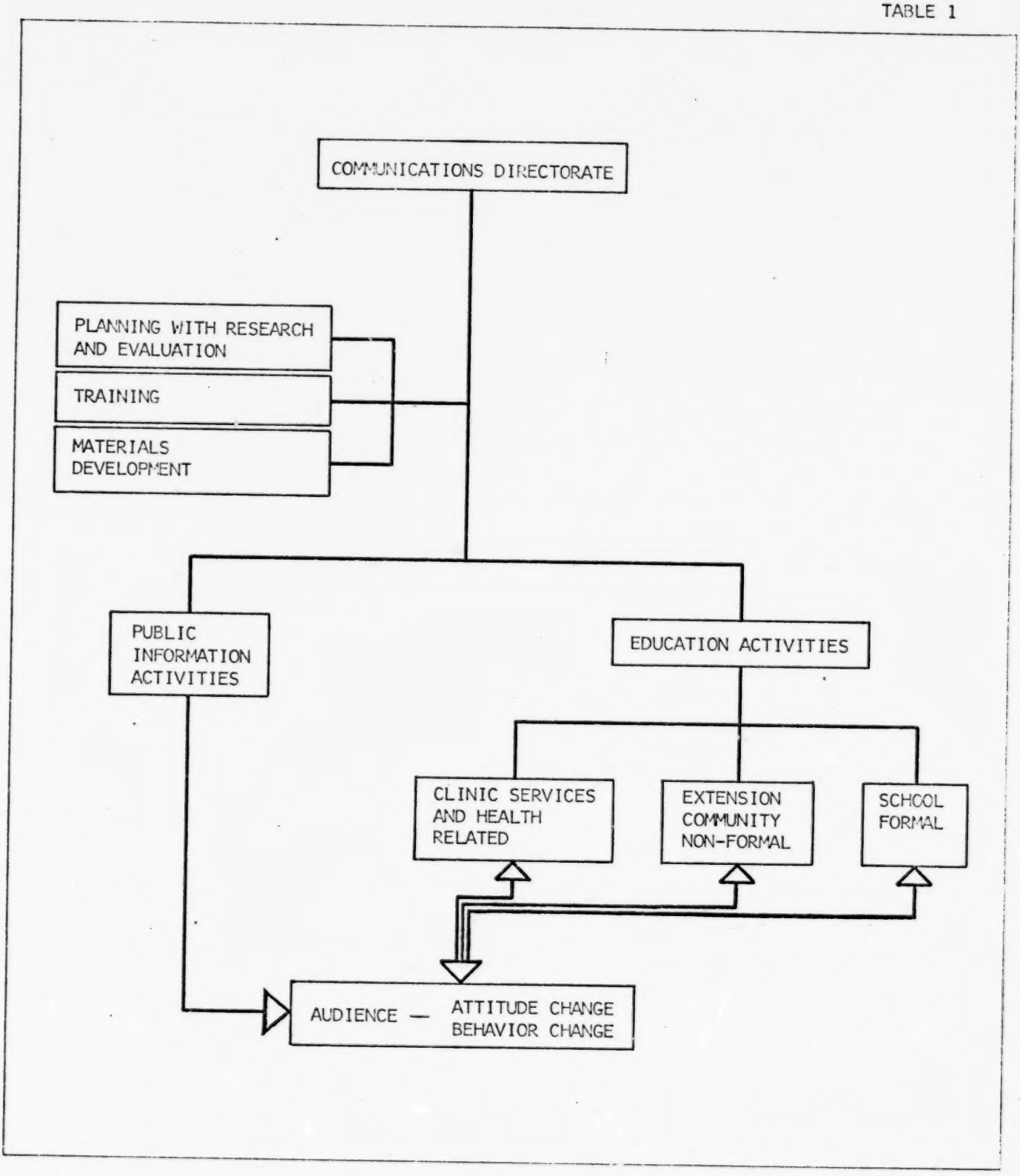
- clinic and services related
- non-formal, extension
- formal, in-school

III. Program Support

- training
- planning, including research and evaluation
- materials development

This paper is concerned with the broad range of program functions grouped under population communications and the use of commercial resources in support of these program functions.

TABLE 1



A "MODEL" COMMUNICATIONS ORGANIZATION

This Conference will be concerned primarily with two commercial methods appropriate to communication—advertising and market research. For this "opening" paper of the Conference, I was asked to "paint a broad picture of how commercial resources are being used around the world" and to "point out areas of concern and opportunity". (2)

COMMERCIAL RESOURCES AND PROGRAM USE

As I surveyed commercial activities in population programs the range of inputs and the varied uses was striking. Therefore, I decided to examine population communications functions and look for commercial activity (Table 2). I found evidence in 27 countries, including paid use of the mass media, advertising and promotion, public relations, marketing, training, research and evaluation, and materials development. Therefore, I decided to include the range of inputs in this report, recognizing that advertising and market research are the focii of this conference but also accepting the charge of pointing out areas of opportunity.

USE OF THE MASS MEDIA

As I began to read and organize my thoughts for this paper I wondered whether it was still necessary to justify the use of the mass media in population activities. And, I came across a report on a family planning education project, issued in 1972, which stated that the effectiveness of mass media has not been proven while person-to-person was clearly effective. (3) Conference participant Richard Manoff, a media professional, wrote:

> *We resent the mass media for their over-emphasis on aimless entertainment, the callous and tasteless importation of foreign program material, their generally low cultural standards ...*

SOME COUNTRIES THAT USE, OR HAVE USED, COMMERCIAL RESOURCES, ACCORDING TO TYPE OF PROGRAM USE							
COUNTRY	USE OF MASS MEDIA	ADVERTISING & PROMOTION	PUBLIC RELATIONS	MARKETING	TRAINING	RESEARCH & EVALUATION	MATERIALS DEVELOPMENT
Colombia	●	●					●
Costa Rica	●	●		●			
Dominican Republic	●						
El Salvador	●	●					
Fiji				●			
Ghana	●	●		●	●	●	●
Great Britain	●	●					●
Hong Kong	●						●
India	●	●		●			
Indonesia					●		●
Iran	●					●	●
Jamaica	●	●				●	
Kenya						●	●
Korea		●			●	●	●
Morocco				●			
Nicaragua	●	●					

TABLE 2

COUNTRY	USE OF MASS MEDIA	ADVERTISING & PROMOTION	PUBLIC RELATIONS	MARKETING	TRAINING	RESEARCH & EVALUATION	MATERIALS DEVELOPMENT
Nigeria	●	●					●
Panama	●	●					
Philippines						●	●
Singapore	●	●					
Sweden		●		●		●	
Taiwan	●				●		
Thailand	●	●			●		
Trinidad	●	●					
Turkey				●			
U.S.A.	●	●				●	
Venezuela			●				

TABLE 2 (CONTINUED)

> *We relieve this resentment with bitter attacks on the mass media. We charge them with "brainwashing" falsehoods, deception, over-commercialization, materialism and mis-education. We end up rejecting the mass media for lacking the nobility we need for our lofty purposes. We retreat with our respectability to the techniques of yesterday and condemn ourselves to struggle at a pace that often produces more despair than development. (Emphasis added)* (4 p. 157)

Manoff points out that the mass media are means to ends, nothing more; "it is up to us to decide the ends and to compel the means to serve them".

Today, 1972, many, if not most, population programs use the mass media. Information releases are sent to the media. Editorial material is prepared specifically for newspapers and magazines. Proponents of family planning appear on radio and television. Newspapers, magazines, radio, television, cinema, outdoor, even bus cards, are being used.

At least 16 country programs buy space and/or time in the mass media (Table 2). Some programs—El Salvador, Ghana, Jamaica—use the mass media extensively. Newspaper space, radio and television time, billboards, space on buses, cinema space, all are bought and paid for. Some countries use the mass media selectively; Nicaragua, for example, in 1973 will conduct a year long national campaign on radio.

In the U.S.A., time and space are donated by the media to the family planning campaign. The prestigious non-profit Advertising Council has designated family planning a priority. This encourages media contributions.

El Salvador, now in the fourth year of its intense, three months a year, multi, mass media campaign has a very suitable mix of paid

and free media. Time and space are bought in the press, radio and television. In addition, for every $1.00 spent the program has $2.50 donated in time or space. This means that the professionally produced campaign receives 3½ times the exposure that is paid for. Why? Napoleon Velarde, Director of the advertising agency that creates the campaign, explains the free space as a sign of social responsibility. The advertising campaign buys time and space. This shows the owner-publishers a serious intent, a concern with population problems. Velarde, and others, talk with media owners encouraging the support of population work—by the donation of time and space.

There are problems in using the mass media. One is fear of use. A fear of public reaction to using the mass media for this "sensitive" subject causes inertia. D. R. Gupta writes of the condom campaign in India:

> *Consider the product itself. A few years ago, most people in India would have regarded the condom as the most embarassing, the most taboo, least-likely-to-be-advertised, consumer product available on the market. Today, Nirodh condoms are being advertised all over India, in cinemas, on the radio, in the press, on match boxes and telephone directory covers, on bus panels and hoardings as well as on outdoor signs and point of purchase material at tens of thousands of retail shops throughout the nation.* (5 p. 1)

The mass media offer program opportunities; "the mass media offer us what I shall call 'the further/faster/frequency capability'—further, to far more people; faster, so we require less time; and frequency, so that by repetition and remembrance our message has a chance to achieve the desired impact. (4 p. 157)

ADVERTISING AND PROMOTION

The use of the commercial services of advertising agencies is increasing. Some programs have limited services. Costa Rica creates its own program materials and uses an advertising agency to buy the media and to distribute the required materials. Nicaragua uses an agency for media scheduling of a national radio campaign as well as production of the spots. The initial message content was developed by a Nicaraguan family planning organization; the advertising agency then produced commercially suitable material.

El Salvador, Ghana, Great Britain, Jamaica, Nigeria and the United States use a full range of advertising agency services. Basic concepts are developed. The material is prepared for media use. Campaign materials are produced for magazines, newspapers, radio, TV and other media.

Thailand, to my knowledge, is the first country in the world to have a special newspaper section on the population problem, with paid advertising. The February 10, 1971 Financial Post, an English-language weekly supplement of the Bangkok Post, had a special section on population; the section carried four contraceptive advertisements, totalling nearly two pages of advertising. Three of the advertisements were for the pill. The fourth displayed Ortho products, including the pill, the diaphram, foam, creams and jellies, and the Lippes loop.

Promotion of family planning also uses commercial resources. For example, Korea:

In approaching the "ruban" areas of the major cities, a somewhat different utilization of commercial resources is proposed. In these areas, one of the most potentially useful channels is that of the manufacturing companies through their teams of door-to-door salesmen. Such personnel constitute a major channel of distribution for several large cosmetic manufacturers. Their major market is in the "ruban" areas, and their sales records indicate that they are extremely successful in reaching the women in these communities. In March of this year, one of the PPFK branch offices attempted to spread information on available family planning services through the use of such salesmen, selected as agents after a short training period. The results, however, were not encouraging and future projects will experiment with various incentive systems. (6 p.7)

Jamaica promotes family planning in many ways—and one rather special one. A brand of women's sanitary napkins is manufactured in Jamaica. Each box carries a promotion leaflet for family planning.

Korea also attempted to use the resources of a private company. Discussions were held with a manufacturer of noodles; the intention was to print the family planning slogan on each box of the product. The idea was ultimately abandoned because of the possibility of a rumor developing that the noodles contained a contraceptive. (6 pgs. 7-8).

One of the principal problems for advertising campaigns in the U.S., and perhaps for other countries, is the unseen censorship of "continuity" departments of radio and TV stations and the "arbiters of taste" on the publishing staffs of magazines and newspapers. Resistance to contraceptive advertising in the U.S. was so complete that a major advertising trade paper had a news story when Canada accepted a contraceptive advertisement. (7)

Conference participant Julian Simon sees increased opportunities for advertising and promotion:

All the action programs have relied on highly informative messages to the market. It is a technical advertising fact that the format and content of informative messages are not such crucial variables here as in the more persuasive communications later in a product's life cycle.

This points directly to an area that badly needs further work, however. Information campaigns alone cannot reduce the birth rate enough to reach acceptable rates of population growth in underdeveloped countries, even though what they accomplish is enormously valuable and is an incredible economic bargain. Underdeveloped countries, therefore, must use persuasive campaigns and bonus incentive plans besides the information campaigns. (8 p. 23)

PUBLIC RELATIONS

In my knowledge, only Venezuela has used a public relations firm. The firm was employed to advise on the design of a fund raising campaign in Venezuela for support of the program activities of the private association.

My conversations with population program people in many parts of the world disclose resistance to commercial public relations. The term is thought to be synonymous with influence peddling, with image makers. Yet the problem is conversely the opportunity. Public relations firms exist in many countries. Some are quite competent and respectable, concerned with the presentation of new ideas, services and products to general publics. Family planning programs are a combination of new ideas, services and products. Our audiences are many. What skills can public relations firms offer that are usable and useful?

MARKETING

The time of commercial marketing of contraceptives is ripe for family planning programs. For a number of years studies, reports and

articles have been describing the role and functions of the private sector in the marketing of contraceptives. (9, 10, 11, 12, 13, 14, 15). These studies often show that more contraceptives are sold commercially than are distributed through family planning programs. A new, as yet incomplete, study compares the distribution of contraceptives in the private sector with the distribution of the same type of contraceptives in the public sector (16). In a given country, each of the couples between the ages of 15-44 is considered to be a potential consumer. The percentage (%) of actual consumers by area is provided:

COUNTRY	% OF PUBLIC SECTOR CONSUMERS	% OF PRIVATE SECTOR CONSUMERS	% OF TOTAL ACTUAL CONSUMERS
Venezuela	1.5	8.1	9.6
Panama	2.3	10.3	12.6
Jamaica	11.7	7.7	19.4
Iran	8.5	6.5	15.0
Turkey	2.8	4.5	7.3
Korea	25.5*	5.6	31.1
Philippines	6.1*	2.6	8.7
Thailand	6.5*	9.5	16.0

* — includes IUD acceptors

In my opinion, the figures are surprising in two ways. First, the total actual consumers figure is often low. Secondly, in at least four countries, the commercial distribution provides more contraception than the public sector.

Increasingly, countries are recognizing the importance of the private sector and the commercial distribution of contraceptives is being used and supported by population agencies. The condom, Nirodh,

campaign in India is well known. Limited efforts have been made in Fiji, Morocco and Turkey. Under the National Family Planning Board, Ghana has developed a commercial marketing program using the state-owned distribution system. A private sector company for the marketing of contraceptives is being established in Kenya.

Costa Rica has developed an interesting combination of public and private sector activities. When a woman visits a public sector clinic and is prescribed the oral pill, she receives an initial supply of pills. She also is given coupons. For subsequent supplies she goes to a pharmacy and buys pills with the coupons. The pills are provided to the pharmacy at a subsidized price. The pharmacy takes a usual commercial markup. The price is controlled, as the coupon carries the purchase price. The pharmacy can get a new supply of subsidized pills by returning the coupons. Of interest, although the system is under national government direction, the program is carried out by the private family planning association.

Proper use of the private sector is not easy. The problems involved are well described in a study of the distribution systems of Colombia, Iran and the Philippines (17) and a study of Kenya, Uganda, Nigeria and Ghana (9). Marketing professors Farley and Leavitt sum up the difficulties very well:

> *Any realistic discussion of a marketing role in population programs must recognize that marketers, marketing thinking and marketing technology are not universally welcomed into the field, nor do marketers themselves necessarily feel comfortable in the population planning. Despite the fact that many countries' low birth rates have derived from non-medical activities and non-public programs, population problems are never-the-less viewed as basically medical, and alternative*

views may not be received enthusiastically. Similarly the prevailing view of what constitutes good research in the field derives again from medical public health and demographic thinking. The rather eclectic and pragmatic definitions of research held by marketers may be seen as sloppy and inadequate, thereby emasculating those activities despite their high potential. Moreover family planning program administrators, governmental or volunteer, often hold at best an apathetic view of business practices in general, and marketing and advertising in particular. This view particularly prevails in those countries where the marketing structure lies entirely in the private sector. For there the profit motive prevails, and the profit motive is likely to be tacitly suspect in the eyes of public sector people. But control activities are held to be a public service which implies that one must scrupulously make sure that those involved recover no more than the cost of the effort; lest they be charged with "profiting from misery". On the other side, of course, marketers who venture into this field must be extremely sensitive to the context of the problem and to the nature of the institutions with which they will be cooperating. Our view is that reasonable men aware of these issues can devise means to avoid these problems early in program development. (18 pgs. 11-12)

Opportunities in private sector programs are numerous. An extension of present thinking, i.e. the use of wholesaler, retailer outlets for contraceptives, occured to me as I read Mr. Cendana's paper for this conference, in which he talks of the serious problems of distributing information materials in the Philippines, a country of many islands. This reminds me of conversations in Indonesia held many months ago about the problem of distributing contraceptives to that country's outer islands. And then in Tim Black's report it is noted that private sector distributors provide contraceptives to Mission hospitals in Kenya (9 p. 128). All of these thoughts and ideas suggest that countries that have difficulty in distributing contraceptives to rural clinics and health posts consider an arrangement with distributors of small consumer products, soap, kerosene, etc., to do contraceptive distribution. Sound ridiculous? Consider

India:

> *A few years ago it would have been hard to imagine that any manufacturer of established brands of consumer goods would even consider risking the possibility of adverse consumer reaction against his products by adding condoms to his line of goods. Yet today, Brooke Bond Tea, Hindustan Lever, India Tobacco, Lipton Tea, Tata Oil Mills, and Union Carbide are all actively distributing and selling Nirodh condoms in exclusive regions covering the entire country.* (5 p. 2)

EDUCATION

As indicated above, commercial resources are widely used in population communications, public information activities. Yet public information is one way of communicating with audiences. Education is the other channel. Education in clinics and health services, in non-formal, extension and formal, in-school situations is of primary importance to the success of population programs. Yet, I can not think of any use of commercial resources in developing educational programs. Nor, can I find any references to use of such resources in the population literature. Why? Is there no place for commercial activities in education? The producers of Sesame Street would disagree. Are there examples of commercial resources used in other fields? Agriculture? Literacy?

TRAINING

As population communications programs become better defined, as the composite of information/education activities becomes more accepted as an integrated whole, the need to train communicators, <u>using communicators as trainers,</u> becomes important. For example, field workers need to be trained in reproduction and contraception but they also need to be trained in the arts and techniques of communication.

Indonesia has used a commercial resource to develop a fieldworker training film. This film shows an "average" day in the life of a fieldworker. It portrays communication problems--and solutions.

Thailand used a commercial resource, a professional in programed instruction materials. Training materials, based on self-instruction concepts, were developed to teach about contraceptives. They were adapted for use in Korea, Taiwan and Ghana.

We, communicators, need to think about training communicators. Commercial resources can help professionalize communications training.

PLANNING, INCLUDING RESEARCH AND EVALUATION

As a program person, I view the planning process as continuous. The objective is to make population programs work better. There is a growing interest and involvement of management people, largely academics, in population work. Communications programs need managerial and administrative assistance. Perhaps, in addition to management professors, commercial sector management consultants have a role to play.

I view research and evaluation from a program perspective. If the results are program useful then the research or evaluation should be done. Conference participant, Dr. A. A. Armar, says it well:

> *But perhaps it is in the actual operation of the programme that the programme administrator is in the greatest need of factual information upon which to base his day-to-day decisions. Let us consider what he needs to know under three headings: (1) immediate (short-term) needs, (2) intermediate needs, and (3) long-term needs.* (19 p. 47)

In discussing short-term research needs, Armar writes:

> *Proceeding on the basis of our Ghanaian experience, we think the following are some examples of the sort of questions to which the administrator needs quick answers to enable him to take immediate, operational decisions:*
>
> *Does a new slogan communicate what is intended?*
>
> *Does the proposed TV or radio spot reach the target audience?*
>
> *How successful was last month's poster campaign?*
>
> *Did the series of newspaper advertisements last month increase clinic attendance?*
>
> *Does the pamphlet we are preparing for school teachers answer the questions they have on population?*
>
> *How do the clients who purchase condoms and foam differ from those who are accepting the pill and IUD?*
>
> *How widely is the red triangle known as the symbol for family planning?*
>
> *Why are substantial numbers of loops being removed in the two large urban areas?*
>
> *One could continue this list almost indefinitely. Looking at the examples, however, we see two types of information that are required. The first is obtained from data generated by the monthly analysis of service statistics ...*
>
> *The second type of information that is required on an immediate or short-term basis perhaps best fits into the classification of "market research". This is the area most neglected to date. Unfortunately the design and conduct of quick, "impressionistic" sample surveys is not often attractive to the university-based social scientist. Yet this type of study can provide the administrator with very useful information on which to base management decisions. Usually this type of study is undertaken for private industry by commercial market research organisations that until recently have not been involved in ongoing family planning programmes. In Ghana we plan to make use of this resource.*
>
> *An example may help to clarify the role we envisage for this type of quick, impressionistic survey. Following a two-month poster campaign in our capital city, we were anxious to determine the extent to which the public identified the red triangle as standing for family planning. We were also anxious to pretest*

the meaning associated with a new slogan, "Family Planning-Better Life". A questionnaire was designed jointly by the market research organisation and staff from our Programme. Within three weeks we had the results from a survey of 200 randomly chosen adults in the urban area. The total cost was less than $800. (19 pgs. 48-49)

A U.S. market research organization was employed to study the marketing of commercial contraceptives in three countries. (17) In the Philippines, an advertising agency was employed to evaluate the effectiveness of family planning comic books. In the U.S., prior to the launching of a national family planning campaign, extensive market research of audiences was done.

In Kenya, a commercial research agency was employed to study various audiences and the means to communicate population/family planning ideas. The project ran into trouble and remains incomplete. Why? There is not yet a clear answer. The difficulties encountered in the project raise questions about the limitations of commercial research. Questions as yet which remain unanswered.

MATERIALS DEVELOPMENT

Many countries use commercial agencies to produce program materials. Ghana and Nigeria had family planning films made by commercial film makers. Kenya used a professional radio company to produce family planning radio dramas. Ghana and the Philippines commercially produce comic books.

In my opinion, the use of commercial resources to produce information/education program materials should be encouraged. Materials must be professional if they are to compete in the market

place. It is expensive to develop production capacity in a program to a professional level. Some countries, Pakistan for example, have done this. The costs were very high, the results mixed. Why buy a cow when you can buy milk in the store?

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